



**Tony Preite, Director**  
**Montana Department of Commerce**

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**CONTACT:** Mat Rude, Multifamily Program  
Manager 841-2845

Leslie Edgcomb, CP Coordinator 841-2817

Anastasia Burton, Housing Promotion Manager  
841-2846

**HOUSING PROGRAMS TO HOLD MEETINGS IN BUTTE**

(HELENA)---Two housing programs which assist local communities with affordable housing options, development, infrastructure, and public facilities will host public meetings in Butte beginning May 18 at the Red Lion Hotel.

“We are moving beyond the old stigma that was sometimes attached to ‘affordable housing.’ It is a simple reality in the Rocky Mountain West that housing prices are skyrocketing,” Governor Brian Schweitzer said. “We are taking efforts to make sure our working families can live in the same communities they work so hard for.”

The first meeting will focus on the Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP), which sets out the standards by which the Montana Board of Housing judges applications for Low Income Housing Tax Credits. Presentations are also on tap regarding “green building” or using energy efficient materials and methods for new buildings or project rehabilitations.

The Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program, which is administered by the Board of Housing in the Montana Department of Commerce, allows qualified owners and investors to purchase tax credits at 70% to 90% of a dollar. The money from the purchase is infused into the financing for the project, allowing the savings accrued over the course of 10 years to be passed on to residents. Department officials expect this program to generate \$18 million in private investment into affordable rental properties across Montana this year.

This meeting begins at 8:00 am on May 18 at the Red Lion Hotel and concludes at noon on May 19. The QAP can be viewed by visiting [www.housing.mt.gov](http://www.housing.mt.gov); click on Multifamily Programs.

Attendees of the QAP meeting as well as the public are invited to the second event, the Consolidated Plan Public Input Meeting. Those attending will discuss the housing, infrastructure, and economic development needs of southwest Montana and the progress of Montana's Consolidated Plan (CP). The CP, a tool used to identify needs and allocate resources to Montana communities and residents, is developed with information from interested citizens. It is coordinated by the Housing Division of the Montana Department of Commerce. The CP meeting takes place over the noon hour on May 18 and lunch will be provided. To learn more about Montana's Consolidated Plan, visit [www.housing.mt.gov](http://www.housing.mt.gov); click on Consolidated Plan.

Tony Preite, Director of the Montana Department of Commerce, encourages involvement of area residents at both meetings. "It's critical that we hear from southwest Montanans with a wide variety of backgrounds at these meetings. We especially want input from developers, low-income citizens, business owners, and agencies which provide assisted housing or social services." Preite added, "We want to ensure our communities succeed and grow in ways that benefit Montana's families."

The Montana Board of Housing is a self-supporting agency that is administratively attached to the Montana Department of Commerce. Since 1977, the MBOH has served 40,000 Montana families by financing nearly \$2.5 billion for affordable homeownership.

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